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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/900,876	07/10/2001	Katsuji Watanabe	210847US0X	5983
22850	7590	10/02/2003	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			MARSCHEL, ARDIN H	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1631	

DATE MAILED: 10/02/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/900,876	Applicant(s) WATANABE ET AL.	
	Examiner Ardin Marschel	Art Unit 1631	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☒ None of:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____. | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

VAGUENESS AND INDEFINITENESS

Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claims 1 and 6, line 1 of each claim, the system and method is indicated as being directed to searching for relationships between base sequence of genes. In contrast the only comparison which would result in a relationship search as cited in the remainder of these claims is between restriction fragment patterns. Thus, the metes and bounds of the claims are unclear as to whether the preamble base sequence relationship search controls the metes and bounds of the claim practice or whether only restriction fragment pattern search, which is different from what a detailed base sequence search would be, controls said metes and bounds. Clarification via clearer claim wording is requested.

TITLE

The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed. Similar to the above unclarity in certain claims, the title is also directed to base sequence relationship practice whereas the actual claim practice seems only to analyze restriction fragment pattern relationships. Also, the instant claims include methods, systems, as well as computer readable recording media whereas, in contrast, the present title only cites methods and systems.

NON-STATUTORY SUBJECT MATTER

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 1-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Consideration of the "Computer-Related Inventions" section of the MPEP at section 2106, Part IV, subpart B, has revealed that the instant claims are directed to non-statutory subject matter without requiring performance of a result outside of a computer. Thus, the manipulation of data or conversion of data, in this case restriction fragment patterns is the claimed subject matter without any physical transformation outside of the computer. It is noted that the last 2 lines of instant claim 1 cites the outputting of results data but without requiring any outside of the computer output. For example, it is well known that a software program may output results to a computer file and not display it, for example, outside of the computer.

PRIOR ART

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Shields et al. [Nucleic Acids Research, Vol. 24, No. 22, pp. 4495-4500 (1996)].

Shields et al. discloses a computer system which assists in the interpretation of restriction digestions as summarized in the title and abstract. An experimental evaluation of restriction fragments was compared to predicted (theoretical as instantly claimed) fragment patterns as described in the paragraph bridging the first and second columns on page 4498. This same paragraph discloses the presence of known genes as part of the analysis as also cited in the instant claims. Table 2 on page 4499 shows observed fragments as well as theoretical fragments predicted to be present but not observed as indicated by a dash (-) in the table. On page 4499, both columns, error calculations as well as confidence levels were disclosed as being calculated which anticipate the degree of similarity limitations of the instant claims. Confidence levels were output as Table 3 on page 4500 which also disclose degrees of similarity as instantly claimed. These disclosures anticipate the instantly claimed invention. Figure 2 on page 4498 also diagrams confidence intervals as required in instant claims 2, 7, and 12. Figure 1 on page 4497 discloses a mean calculation in the legend without weighting of related or paired restriction sites as required in instant claims 4, 9, and 14. Computers as utilized in the reference must inherently contain memory which is a recording medium as in instant claims 11 etc.

No claim is allowed.

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Papers related to this application may be submitted to Technical Center 1600 by facsimile transmission. Papers should be faxed to Technical Center 1600 via the PTO Fax Center located in Crystal Mall 1. The faxing of such papers must conform with the notices published in the Official Gazette, 1096 OG 30 (November 15, 1988), 1156 OG 61 (November 16, 1993), and 1157 OG 94 (December 28, 1993)(See 37 CFR § 1.6(d)). The CM1 Fax Center number is either (703)308-4242 or (703)305-3014.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ardin Marschel, Ph.D., whose telephone number is (703)308-3894. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8 A.M. to 4 P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Woodward, Ph.D., can be reached on (703)308-4028.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to Legal Instrument Examiner, Tina Plunkett, whose telephone number is (703)305-3524 or to the Technical Center receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196.

September 29, 2003


ARDIN H. MARSCHEL
PRIMARY EXAMINER